



**PLANNING COMMISSION  
Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
Council Chambers  
8200 Westminster Boulevard  
Westminster, CA 92683  
August 17, 2016  
6:30 p.m.**

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**1. PLANNING COMMISSION ROLL CALL:**

**ANDERSON, MANZO, NGUYEN, RICE, AND VO**

PRESENT: Anderson, Manzo, and Vo

ABSENT: Nguyen, Rice

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Steve Ratkay, Associate Planner, Alexis Oropeza, Associate Planner, Soroosh Rahbari, Community Development Director, Tami Piscotty, Housing Coordinator, Brian Fisk, Interim Planning Manager, Shelley Dolney, Administrative Assistant, Wendy Nowak, Associate Principal, Placeworks, Amanda Tropiano, Senior Associate, Placeworks, Nicole Morse, Associate Principal, Placeworks, Jason Pack, Senior Associate, Fehr and Peers

**2. SALUTE TO FLAG:**

Commissioner Vo led the salute to the flag.

**3. REPORT FROM PLANNING SECRETARY ON LATE COMMUNICATION ITEMS**

Associate Planner Ratkay stated there are no late communication items.

**4. EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner Vo stated he visited the site for item 8.1.

**5. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS - None**

**6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS - None**

**7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 20, 2016**

**Motion:** It was moved by Vice Chair Manzo, and seconded by Chair Anderson, to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes of July 20, 2016 as presented. The motion carried (3-0) with the following vote:

AYES: ANDERSON, MANZO, VO  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: NGUYEN, RICE  
ABSTAIN: NONE

## **8. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **8.1 Case No. 2016-07 (Waiver of Final Parcel Map, and approval of Certificate of Compliance, Development Review and Variance from the City's Parking Standards)**

**Location: 13811 Locust Street (APN #096-072-11)**

**Applicant: American Family Homes**

The proposed project involves the development of three residential units, and a request for a waiver of Final Parcel Map. Each of the three units is proposed with one garage space and three off-street open parking spaces. A Variance is proposed for three garage parking spaces, whereas Westminster Municipal Code requires a minimum of four garage parking spaces.

Associate Planner Steve Ratkay provided a presentation to the Commission.

CHAIR ANDERSON OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING AND ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY SPEAKERS WISHING TO SPEAK IN FAVOR OR OPPOSITION; THERE BEING NONE, CHAIR ANDERSON CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Vice Chair Manzo, stated he liked the appearance of the project and believe the parking would be sufficient. He stated he was in favor of the project which fills a need for additional affordable housing in the City.

Commissioner Vo, stated the City needed more projects like this that would improve the housing in the City and he was in favor of approving the project.

Chair Anderson, concurred with other Commissioner comments; adding, the project is well designed, attractive, will fit into the neighborhood, and will provide valuable housing for the affordable market. He asked the applicant if the decorative concrete shown on the plans will be included in the final product.

Jason McGlasson, project manager working for AFH, stated the color stamped concrete will be included in the project and confirmed the design on the plans would be the finished design of the project.

**Motion was made by Vice Chair Manzo, and seconded by Commissioner Vo, to waive Final Parcel map for Case No. 2016-07 and approve Certificate of Compliance, Development Review, and Variance from the City's Parking Standards. The motion carried (3-0) with the following vote:**

AYES:           ANDERSON, MANZO, VO  
NOES:           NONE  
ABSENT:        NGUYEN, RICE

**8.2 Case No. 2014-68 General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report (State Clearing House No. 2015111068)**

**Location: Citywide**

**Applicant: City of Westminster**

A presentation of the 2015-2035 General Plan Public Hearing Draft, Implementation Plan Public Hearing Draft, and associated Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The proposed General Plan updates and reorganizes all elements of the current General Plan except for the Housing Element (last updated January 2015 and is valid through October 2021). The state mandated elements of the updated General Plan are organized into the following Chapters:

- Land Use;
- Mobility;
- Parks and Recreation;
- Infrastructure and Natural Resources; and
- Public Health and Safety

The City of Westminster also elected to prepare two optional elements to address special community priorities:

- Economic Development
- Community Design

An Implementation Plan, prepared concurrently with the General Plan, establishes the actions needed to be carried out so that the vision, goals, and policies identified in the General Plan can be achieved.

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared as a companion document to the General Plan and assesses the potential environmental impacts generated and mitigation measures to address the impacts.

CEQA: The Draft Environmental Impact Report has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). According to Section 15168 of the CEQA guidelines, a Program EIR may be prepared for a series of actions that can be characterized as a single project. The EIR assesses the potential impacts that are generated by the goals and policies of the General Plan, and identifies mitigation measures to address those impacts. Unavoidable significant adverse impacts have been identified in four environmental topic areas: 1) Air Quality; 2) Greenhouse Gas Emissions; 3) Noise; and 4) Transportation and Traffic.

Associate Planner Steve Ratkay introduced the project team that has worked on the General Plan update: From the City staff, Alexis Oropeza, Associate Planner, Brian Fisk, Interim Planning Manager, Soroosh Rahbari, Community Development Director; and, from the consultant team, Wendy Nowak and Amanda Tropiano. He stated Wendy and Amanda will be providing the presentation.

At this time, a Power Point presentation was shown on the monitors for the Planning Commission and public to view.

Associate Principal Wendy Nowak provided an overview and/or summary of the following topics from the Power Point presentation:

#### A General Plan History, “how we got here”

- Westminster’s current General Plan is 20 years old (adopted in 1996)
- Spring 2014: Council directed staff to initiate an update to the General Plan
- Create a contemporary plan reflective of new state laws, changing demographics, community needs and priorities.
- Provides direction of how and where community will grow, can inform future economic strategies, and can be used to help City seek funding for certain initiatives.

#### Project Overview

- Establishing the Framework
- Development the Land Use Plan
- Drafting the General Plan & EIR

#### Community Outreach

- Getting the Word out
  - 100 bus shelter ads
  - 32,000 direct mailers and flyers
- Community Events
  - Asian Garden Mall
  - Concerts in the Park
  - Open houses throughout the Community
  - Other community events (Safety Day, Dia De La Familia, Tet Festival, Harvest Moon Festival)
- Project Website
  - [www.westminstergp.org](http://www.westminstergp.org)
- General Plan Advisory Committee

#### What is a General Plan and what does a General Plan Do?

- The State of California requires every city and county to have a General Plan. The General Plan represents the community’s view of its future. It is...
  - A long-term, vision and blueprint for a city’s growth and development
  - Constitution for future development

- A guiding document for administrative and legislative functions
- A General Plan contains goals, policies, maps, diagrams, and implementation action items.

#### Future Vision of the General Plan through 2060

- Sense of Place
- Community Culture
- Quality Neighborhoods and Housing Choices
- Vibrant Economy
- Easy access and mobility
- Sufficient Parks and Recreation Opportunities

#### What topics does a General Plan Cover?

- Required Topics
  - Land Use
  - Housing
  - Circulation
  - Conservation
  - Open Space
  - Noise
  - Safety
- Additional topics
  - Economic Development (optional)
  - Community Design (optional)

#### General Plan Highlights (Five Key Highlights)

1. A new mixed-use land use designation that accommodates future growth along the City's key corridors and around major activity centers while preserving the City's established single-family neighborhoods (Land Use Element)
2. Guidance to create a community identity for Westminster (Community Design Element)
3. A framework to create "Complete Streets" that meet all the needs of all users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and transit users (Mobility Element)
4. Identification of the City's economic development opportunities (Economic Development Element).
5. A list of specific actions that the City can take to implement the ideas in the General Plan, including responsible departments and estimated timeframes to complete them (Implementation Plan)

Vice Chair Manzo stated he was concerned about the future of the General Plan and possible variances to the goals and requirements of the plan. He asked what could be done to avoid variances to the General Plan in the future since the Commission, Council, and staff will change over the years.

Associate Principal Wendy Nowak responded stating consistency is the issue and it comes down to the decision makers to follow the General Plan.

Chair Anderson offered the safety net for the General Plan is the City's professional planners on who will be tuned in to the requirements of the General Plan and make recommendations to applicants, Planning Commission, and City Council Members regarding consistency with the General Plan. Ultimately, it would be up to the Planning Commission and City Council to make decisions based on those recommendations.

Senior Associate Amanda Tropiano provided an overview and/or summary of the following topics from the Power Point presentation:

#### Land Use Element/Land Use Considerations

- Preserve existing Single Family neighborhoods
- Accommodate new housing types for changing demographics and community need (diversity in choice)
- Focused areas of change (only 15 percent of the community/land uses have changed)
- Allow for flexibility in uses
- Create gathering spaces and activity centers

#### Mixed-Use Designation

- New mixed-use designation to enhance economic vitality and flexibility in land use options to promote growth and development in strategic locations (Goals LU-2 and LU-3)
  - Sample Implementation
    - Update Development Code and Zoning Map to reflect updated General Plan designations
    - Monitor and manage the preferred mix of uses in each area
    - Identify a list of priority projects
- MU Westminster Blvd/Downtown
- MU Civic Center
- MU Little Saigon
- MU Westminster Mall
- MU Corridors
- MU Northwest District

#### Community Design Element/Community Design Considerations

- Create identity and special sense of place
- Promote high-quality design
- Focus on corridors, neighborhoods, landscaping, etc.
- Preserve and celebrate cultural resources

#### Community Identity

- Create a special sense of place and distinct community identity though (Goal CD-1):
  - Physical improvements
  - Enhancing and preserving existing neighborhoods
  - Establishing mixed-use activity centers
  - Preserving cultural resources
  - Establishing well-designed gateways
    - Sample Implementation:
      - Prepare a Master Streetscape Program
      - Update the Development Code to require that residential/commercial mixed-use project provide on-site gathering spaces (plazas, courtyards, etc.) and other pedestrian-scale amenities

#### Mobility Element/Mobility Considerations

- Provide a safe, efficient, and accessible transportation system for all users of all ages and abilities (complete streets)
- Promote walking, bicycling, and transit use (active transportation)
- Ensure parking meets the needs of the community
- Identify strategies to improve the efficiency of Westminster's mobility system
- Use the General Plan as a tool to help secure funding for new improvements

#### Complete Streets

- Identify which modes of travel should be prioritized on each street (layered networks approach) to ensure a safe, efficient, and accessible transportation system that serves the mobility needs of all users, of all ages and abilities (Goal M-1)
  - Sample Implementation:
    - Update the City's transportation impact study guidelines to identify methodologies and serve levels that should be addressed in traffic studies (consistent with state law)

#### Active Transportation

- Create two pedestrian/bicycle circulator loops (east and west of Beach Boulevard) and prepare plans that will make the city competitive for project funding at the local, regional, and state levels (Goal M-2)
  - Sample Implementation:
    - Prepare an Active Transportation Plan (Underway) and plan, design, construct, and fund bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects in accordance with the Plan to improve connectivity, accessibility, and safety.

#### Economic Development Element/Market analysis "Big Ideas"

- Quality of life
  - 7.1% of Westminster's residents work in the City, but average commute times are normal

- Household income is lower than Orange County and comparison cities, but is rising
- Potential to Capture Segments of Local Economy
  - Westminster has minimal industrial and professional office uses but many residents who work in those sectors
  - Aging of the baby boomers and future competition for skilled and educated workers
  - Opportunity for educational and/or medical services appropriate for Westminster
- Residential Market Demand
  - Potential market demand for single-family and multifamily units over the next 5 years (and beyond)
  - Housing affordability and amenity preferences for first-time homebuyers
- Retail Demand
  - Westminster is a regional retail destination
  - Attracting new retail businesses means attracting more customers from elsewhere
  - Unique experience-oriented shopping
- Don't try to be everything to everyone
  - Market potential for industrial, professional and management offices, education and medical services, and residential
  - Being a bedroom community is okay!
- Plan for tomorrow
  - Today's trends will not last forever
  - Millennials' housing market choices
  - Experience-oriented shopping
- Build Places, not Buildings
  - Public desire to create a "place"
  - Learn lessons from neighbors, but do not try to replicate them

#### Economic Development Opportunities

- Create experience-oriented destinations in Westminster – niche commercial districts and corridors, social experiences, walkable, mixed-use districts and a downtown area will expand job opportunities and improve the quality of life (Goal ED-1)
  - Sample Implementation:
    - Prepare an economic development marketing package for business retention and expansion, business attraction, and business start-ups

#### Implementation Plan

- Serves as a guide for City-elected officials, City staff, and the public in implementing the goals and policies of the general plan
- Intended to be used as a working tool and a checklist of specific actions that the City can take to implement the ideas in the General Plan, including responsible departments and estimated timeframes to complete them



- The City Council may consider forming an Implementation Task Force to prioritize and develop strategies and seek funding for items identified in the Implementation Plan

#### Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

- Disclose project impact to public and decision makers
- Identify ways to avoid or reduce environmental impacts (mitigation measures)
- Analyze alternatives to the proposed project
- Foster inter-agency coordination and review
- Most impacts generated by the General Plan can be mitigated to “less than significant” through design strategies, code requirements, fees, etc.
- However, even with mitigation, General Plan projects can result in some unavoidable impacts. In Westminster, these unavoidable impacts are related to:
  - Air Quality
  - Greenhouse gas emissions
  - Noise
  - Transportation/Traffic
- If the City finds that the benefits of the project outweigh the unavoidable impacts, they can adopt a “Statement of Overriding Considerations” as part of the project’s approval

#### Next Steps/Schedule

- August 15, 2016 (past): DEIR mandatory 45-day public review period closed
- August 31, 2016: Planning Commission Public Hearing #2
  - Response to comments on EIR will be presented to the Commission
- September 14, 2016: City Council Public Hearing #1
- September 16, 2016: Beginning of mandatory 10-day agency statutory review period for Final EIR
- September 28, 2016: City Council Public Hearing #2
  - Adopt the General Plan and certify the EIR

Chair Anderson thanked Associate Principal Wendy Nowak and Senior Associate Amanda Tropiano for their presentation. He complimented the format and size of the General Plan as being very user friendly, well laid out, easy to understand, and he believed it will have a real beneficial impact for the City. He thanked the staff and consultants for their efforts.

Vice Chair Manzo thanked everyone involved in the General Plan process for their hard work. He stated he is really excited about the General Plan, proposed mixed use areas, and just wants it to be done already. He added this was a great accomplishment from the whole group.

Commissioner Vo stated he felt the City needed a new image and the General plan would be the catalyst. He thanked everyone for their hard work and felt everyone did a great job.

CHAIR ANDERSON OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING AND ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY SPEAKERS WISHING TO SPEAK IN FAVOR OR OPPOSITION; THERE BEING NONE, CHAIR ANDERSON CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING.

**Motion was made by Chair Anderson**, and seconded by Vice Chair Manzo, to receive staff's presentation of General Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report, receive public testimony, and continue the Public Hearing to a meeting on Wednesday, August 31, 2016 for Case No. 2014-68. The motion carried (3-0) with the following vote:

AYES:	ANDERSON, MANZO, VO
NOES:	NONE
ABSENT:	NGUYEN, RICE

## **9. REGULAR BUSINESS - None**

## **10. REPORTS**

### **10.1.MATTERS FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

Summary of meeting with Southern California Edison to discuss development requirements on properties owned by Southern California Edison.

Associate Planner, Steve Ratkay, provided a recap of the meeting with Southern California Edison (SCE) representatives regarding property development requirements within City limits. He informed the Commission that the meeting was attended by Chair Anderson and City staff via teleconference with SCE. He explained that two teams at SCE provide approvals, one for development of the land and one for cell towers. They also informed the group that if any conditions are imposed by the City that conflicts with SCE's approval requirements, the land would remain undeveloped or unoccupied. Mr. Ratkay stated the information gathered from the meeting was very helpful and gave staff and the Commission more insight on what can be done with these properties.

Associate Planner, Steve Ratkay, spoke about the Planning Director's Association of Orange County Forum scheduled September 22, 2016. He stated there is specific topics of interest for Planning Commissioners and staff can facilitate the Commission's attendance if desired.

Associate Planner, Steve Ratkay, responded to a previous request by Commissioner Nguyen regarding safety of panhandlers located in the median various streets within the City. He stated that the Westminster Police Department recommended contacting their non-emergency number when the Commission has a concern and an officer will be dispatched to make a determination if the individual poses some sort of a risk to themselves or the community.

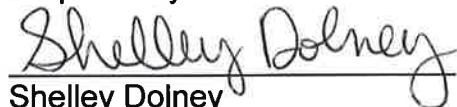
Chair Anderson stated he had follow up to a concern raised several meetings ago by Vice Chair Manzo regarding the misconduct of certain public officials. Chair Anderson stated he came across a code of ethics and conduct adopted by the City of Riverside and he felt adopting a similar a similar Code would be a great asset to the community; providing a sense of wellbeing and security to our residents and Commissioners, Committee Members, and Council Members to have requirements spelled out in the Code. Chair Anderson asked to have this item placed on the agenda for the September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting to allow for discussion among the Commissioners and a possible recommendation of adoption to the City Council.

**10.2.AB 1234 Reports – None**

- 11. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m. to an adjourned meeting on Wednesday, August 31, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.**

  
Don Anderson  
Chairman  
Brian Fisk  
Planning Commission Secretary

Prepared by:

  
Shelley Dolney  
Administrative Assistant